



United States Department of Agriculture

August 13, 2014

**Livestock Producers May be Eligible for Drought Compensation - by Mark Cadle, USDA Farm Service Agency Missouri State Executive Director (360 words)**

Did you own livestock in 2012? What a year that was! Pastures and ponds dried up. Hay was a hot commodity and in some cases, hard to find. Things may have looked pretty bleak at the time. Fast forward to the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill with legislation authorizing the Livestock Forage Disaster Assistance Program (LFP).

The Farm Bill provided retroactive authority to cover grazing losses back to Oct. 1, 2011. If you owned livestock during this time, you may be eligible for payment through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). Sign up for LFP began in April and I encourage livestock producers who have not applied to contact their local FSA county office as soon as possible.

Drought compensation payments are equal to 60 percent of the monthly feed cost for up to five months. FSA calculates LFP payments based on head of eligible livestock owned or leased at the time of the drought or by the carrying capacity of the grazing land.

Eligible livestock include beef and dairy cattle, alpacas, buffalo, beefalo, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, poultry, reindeer, sheep and swine that would have been grazing during the drought. The livestock must have been maintained for commercial use as part of the farming operation. For example, excluded uses include animals used for recreational purposes such as show animals, pets or pleasure riding or roping. If you sold, or otherwise disposed of your livestock because of the drought, you may still qualify for a payment.

Applying for the program is fairly simple. FSA will have you certify the number of acres and types of forage and the number of head of livestock you owned or leased in 2012. In some counties, there was a qualifying drought event also 2011 and 2013. Your local office will be able to tell you how many months will be used in your payment calculation.

In Missouri, we have processed over 31 thousand applications to date. If you have not already applied or set an appointment, please contact your local FSA office for additional information. A listing of USDA Service Centers can be found at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and click on "Contact Us".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Cadle", written in a cursive style.

Mark Cadle  
State Executive Director  
Missouri Farm Service Agency

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